

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF STAFFORD, TEXAS HELD  
IN PERSON IN SAID CITY ON  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022**

On the 5th day of January 2022, at 7:00 p.m., the City Council of Stafford, Texas met in regular session in the City Council Chambers in said City. Mayor Willis called the meeting to order. The following members of the Council were present: Councilmembers Mayor Cecil Willis, Mayor Pro Tem Mathew and Councilmembers Wen Guerra, Virginia Rosas, Don Jones, Alice Chen, and Xavier Herrera. Absent: None. The following City staff were present: Nicola Browe (Acting City Secretary); Scott McElrath (Code Compliance Administrator); Art Pertile (Olson & Olson, LLP). Katie Rutherford (Olson& Olson, LLP).

NOTE: Items appearing in these minutes are in the order they were discussed, not necessarily in the order they appeared on the agenda.

1. Mayor Willis Called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
2. Executive session as authorized by Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Section 551.0771(1)(A), pending or contemplated litigation; Section 551.071(2), authorized under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas.

**COUNCIL RECONVENED AT 7:00 P.M.**

3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Consideration of appropriate action on items discussion Executive Session. The City Council did not go into Executive Session.
5. Council Reports:  
Mayor Willis wished everyone a Happy New Year and hoped their holidays were healthy and safe. He went on to say he hoped that 2022 would be a better year, however, the city council has returned to a social distance format for City Council meetings in an abundance of caution.

Mayor Willis announced that January is School Board recognition month and wanted to thank the Stafford Municipal School District for their dedication to the children of Stafford. He then read from a proclamation that he would be presenting to the school board at their next meeting.

Councilmember Guerra stated he wished to recognize the passing of two individuals of Stafford.

Councilmember Rosas wished everyone a Happy New Year and looked forward to a dynamic 2022. She also noted an individual who passed away, a long-standing resident.

Councilmember Rosas gave a summary on the New Year's Eve Bash and noted that attendance was down due to the increase of the Covid-19 virus.

Councilmember Rosas spoke about the grand opening of the Cash Road Extension, and thanked those officials who attended, along with County Commissioners, engineers, staff and Police and Public Works crews who kept those in attendance safe.

Councilmember Herrera stated that he is appreciative of the Mayors recognition of the SMSD school board. He went on to say that the relationship between the two entities is at an all-time high.

Councilmember Herrera announced the SYB association and noted that the 2022 season begins January 8<sup>th</sup> at the High School Campus.

Councilmember Jones thanked the Mayor for the school board recognition and agreed that the relationship is booming, and that communication from the school is excellent and consistent. He applauded them for their bold statement and stance on the CDC recommendations with masks and vaccines.

Councilmember Chen stated that she would like to echo Councilmember Jones on the vaccines for children and noted that she has several friends who are doctors and have children as their patients in ICU, and they urge all parents to consider omicron equally as dangerous and to have their children vaccinated if they are in the eligible age groups.

Councilmember Chen went on to congratulate and told of her immense pride in the Stafford Stem Magnet School, that has had all their 8<sup>th</sup> grade pass with a 100% on their math curriculum. She went on to urge parents that enrollment is now, and that it is a school from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to 9<sup>th</sup>. There is a test for the student and a parent interview, but this is a school of excellence and urged parents to enroll now.

Councilmember Chen also announced that the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is going to be February 28<sup>th</sup> through to March 20<sup>th</sup> and tickets are on sale.

6. Mayor Willis invited members of the public to discuss items listed on the agenda.

7. (a) Discussion on the Stafford (Cravens) Cemetery.

Mayor Willis introduced this item and gave a brief history of how the city became responsible for the maintenance of the cemetery.

Art Pertile, Attorney provided a more in depth and detailed explanation of the cemetery's owners, including the alleged unrecorded activity at the cemetery, where people were being buried anywhere within the site, without markers and sometimes people were buried on top of each other.

Mr. Pertile then provided a breakdown of the responsibilities that Stafford has undertaken when the property was "abandoned". He also pointed out specifically what cannot be done at the cemetery for perpetuity.

Mayor Willis invited Ms. Sadie Williams of the Stafford Historical Society to the podium to speak a little about the cemetery.

Ms. Williams stated that at one time the cemetery was the pride of joy for Stafford. Research has been conducted over the years to locate a proper record of burials that took place there. She provided a presentation of whom was interred there and noted that the cemetery is nicknamed the "Cravens" but really should be formally named the Stafford cemetery.

Art Pertile advised against that, as there is a pending litigation and naming it Stafford, infers ownership by the city. Under the procedure that took place we the city are guardians only, not owners. He went on to explain that an individual was arrested and there is still a case pending for unlicensed and improper burials and in fact there is still three cremains in our evidence room on this case.

Councilmember Jones stated he agreed with Sadie, that a name change would be suitable.

Art Pertile explained that by changing the name, you the city then take on the liability, the cemetery was a public nuisance, and no more burials can be conducted at the site.

Councilmember Rosas clarified that with tonight's discussion from the Crummel family, we are looking at that only.

Mayor Willis introduced Mr. Glenn Crummel, Aaron Crummel and Ms. Heather Crummel.

The Crummel family participated in the meeting providing City Council with background to their family and the untimely passing of their father in

Washington VA Hospital in the 1980's. The Crummel family described their almost 4-decade long search for where their father had been laid to rest. Eventually they discovered the VA in Washington had transported him to some family in Stafford, Texas, who then sought to have him buried in the Stafford Cravens Cemetery. The marker was a simple tin marker, however, after 40 years that has long since disappeared.

Their research took them to the Fort Bend County library of Burials and armed with the list of people interred, were able to locate their father's grave. They traveled to Stafford to pay their respects in person, as they were only six or so years old when he passed and never knew much about his passing until now. They decided to honor their father they would get him a head stone. They contacted the City and Cornerstone memorials and obtained a headstone and paid for it. It was not until Cornerstone contacted the city that they discovered the multitude of restrictions and are formally requesting that their request for an in ground flat marker to be approved to honor their father. The marker would not interfere with maintenance as it would be flush with the ground.

Mayor and City Council offered their condolences and discussed with the attorney their request.

Attorney Art Pertile stated that as their marker is a flat one to be installed flat with the ground this is permissible under the current resolution for the Cemetery.

Mayor Willis spoke to the Crummel family again and reiterated that they are granted permission to have the marker installed for their father.

Ms. Crummel thanked everyone concerned and inquired what the process would be.

Mayor Willis advised the family that upon Cornerstone scheduling the installation, have them call the City Secretary. She will coordinate with our Public Works who can be on site to assist and ensure that it is done correctly and safely.

The Crummel family extended their deep appreciation for the understanding.

Mayor Willis invited members of the public to address City Council on this item. No members of the public addressed City Council.

(b) No action was taken on this item.

8. (a) Consent Agenda (Items i-x). Any item tagged will be discussed and considered at the conclusion of this item or at the next regular City Council Meeting; any item approved will include payment of expenses.
- I. Approval of Acting City Secretary's request to allocate funds from the contingency fund for the secure destruction of records, having past their retention schedule in the amount of \$9,800.00.
  - II. Approval of an Ordinance of the City of Stafford, Texas adopting Budget Amendment # 1 to the original budget of the City of Stafford, Texas for the 2021-2022 Fiscal year, providing for supplemental appropriation and/or transfer of certain funds; providing for severability and containing other provisions relating to the subject.
  - III. Approval of Code Compliance Administrators request to hold a Spay and Neuter event in conjunction with Houston Humane Society.
  - IV. Approval of Code Compliance Administrators request to establish and develop a "Civic Engagement Committee", to monitor and establish events including Stafford Spring Clean Up.
  - V. Approval of IT Director's request to allocate funds to purchase Isilon data storage that is required for storage of video files, in the amount of \$73,356.90.
  - VI. Approval of the Investment report for the month of November 2021.
  - VII. Approval of Police Chief's request to approve training and all related expenses for employees in the Police Department in the amount of \$475.00.
  - VIII. Approval of refunds or transfer of fees for cancelled events as requested by clients or required by the City due to COVID-19 for the Stafford Civic Center.
  - IX. Approval of a Resolution of the City of Stafford, Texas authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement with "Always In Season Inc" for interior landscape maintenance in the amount of \$4,630.68.
  - X. Approval of Battalion Chief's request for training and all related expenses for employees in the Fire Department in the amount of \$7,800.00.

Councilmember Rosas asked to tag item III and IV, Councilmember Chen asked to tag item II.

Scott McElrath spoke on items III and IV and provided an update on the two programs and his desires for the community involvement in committees for events such as Spring Clean up.

Councilmember Chen spoke on item II, stating that she had reviewed the items in the budget amendment and thanked Ms. Shah, Finance Director for her diligence.

Mayor Willis invited members of the public to address City Council on this item. No members of the public addressed City Council.

Councilmember Rosas made a motion to approve the consent agenda items i-x as presented. Councilmember Guerra duly seconded the motion. Mayor Willis called the roll for a vote. Mayor Willis, Mayor Pro Tem Mathew and Councilmembers Guerra, Rosas, Jones, Chen, and Herrera voted "yes" none against. Mayor Willis announced the result of the vote (7-0) and declared the motion approved

9. (a) Approval of the following City Council Meeting Minutes of Regular City Council December 15, 2021.

Councilmember Guerra made a motion to approve the minutes with the minor correction indicated by Ms. Chen. Councilmember Chen duly seconded the motion. Mayor Willis called the roll for a vote. Mayor Willis, Mayor Pro Tem Mathew and Councilmembers Guerra, Rosas, Jones, Chen, and Herrera voted "yes" none against. Mayor Willis announced the result of the vote (7-0) and declared the motion approved.

10. (a) Discussion of requests by Councilmembers for future agenda items.

Councilmember Rosas made a motion to have Frontier Communications representatives to come to City Council and discuss the recent installation of the Fiber Optic boxes in the community. Mayor Pro Tem Mathew duly seconded the motion. Mayor Willis called the roll for a vote. Mayor Pro Tem Mathew, Councilmembers Guerra, Rosas, Jones, Chen, and Herrera voted "yes"; Mayor Willis voted against. Mayor Willis announced the result of the vote (6-1) and declared the motion approved.

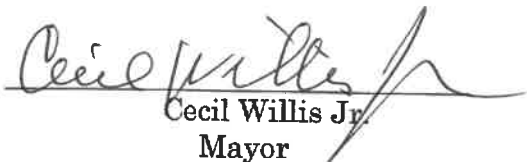
11. Councilmember Herrera made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Guerra duly seconded the motion. Mayor Willis called the roll for a vote. Mayor Willis, Mayor Pro Tem Mathew and Councilmembers Guerra, Rosas, Jones, Chen, and Herrera voted "yes" none against. Mayor Willis announced the result of the vote (7-0) and declared the motion approved.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:30 PM.

ATTEST:



Nicola Browe  
Acting City Secretary



Cecil Willis Jr.  
Mayor